SAKU,
I WANT TO SMARTEN UP OUR TROOPS JUST LIKE THAT OX.
ISN'T THAT A CEREMONIAL OX?
HOW DO YOU SPRUCE UP SOLDIERS?
SAKU,
I AM SENDING YOU TO A TERRITORY WHERE YOU WILL BE STEWARD

YOUR POSITION IS IMPORTANT, YOU WILL COME INTO CONTACT WITH OUR NEIGHBORS— THE BARBARIANS
LEAD THE ARMY, AND SUPPORT YOUR BROTHER YUU
YES, FATHER.
The Pledged Ox
盟約の牛
Kayase Shiki
榧世シキ
PRINCE SAKU!
chatter
chatter
SORRY
IF ANYTHING WERE TO HAPPEN TO YOU!, OUR HEADS WOULD ROLL!
PLEASE, YOUR HIGHNESS, STOP WANDERING AIMLESSLY
THERE YOU ARE!

STILL, I NEVER WOULD HAVE THOUGHT DEFENDING THE NATIONAL FRONTIER WOULD BE A LEISURELY JOB.
A FEW YEARS AGO, SUCH A THING WOULD BE UNTHINK-ABLE
QUITE SO.
IN THE PAST, SENDING A PRINCE HERE WAS THE SAME AS SENDING HIM TO HIS DEATH
Death
COME FALL, THE BARBARIANS WILL INVADE AND PLUNDER AS THEY DO EVERY YEAR.
THOSE NEIGHBORS OF OURS ARE ALWAYS VIOLATING OUR BORDERS
CROWN PRINCE YUU IS A NOTABLE DIPLOMAT.
HE MINGLES WITH MANY NATIONS AND APPEASES BARBARIANS.
EVEN GREAT NATIONS SHOW HIM RESPECT.
THAT IS MORE THAN WE, AS A SMALL STATE, COULD EVER HOPE FOR.

MAYBE I SHOULD PUT THEM OUT TO PASTURE.
AT THIS RATE, WE SOLDIERS WON'T HAVE MUCH TO DO.
NO, BUT JUST IN CASE
MY BROTHER HAS ALWAYS BEEN DELICATE.
YES, IN ALL LIKELI-HOOD
IS HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS VERY MUCH ILL?
IS IT POSSIBLE TO SEND THEM TO THE CAPITAL?
PRINCE SAKU,
WE HAVE FOUND A PHYSICIAN AND AN APOTHECARY AS YOU WISHED
I SEE
THAT IS A CONCERN INDEED.
SOME ARE NOT ABOVE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS'S FRAIL HEALTH.

WHAT IS THAT, IF I MAY ASK?
THIS?
MY BROTHER'S WORDS FROM LONG AGO
"MAY THE ARMY BECOME SYNONYMOUS WITH THE PLEDGED OX"?
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS'S OWN WORDS?
WELL, I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT MYSELF
...THER.
BROTHER
I THOUGHT MY BROTHER SAID IT TO MEAN A CROWN PRINCE'S TOOL.
HOW DO YOU SPRUCE THEM UP?
YOU WILL FIND OUT ONE DAY—

KIND...
AND WISE
... WHEN THE KINGDOM HAS TRULY PROSPERED.
I'LL UPHOLD THE KINGDOM WITH YOU.
SOME DAY, I, TOO...
GRAVE CONDITION?! DID HE CONTRACT A CONTAGIOUS DISEASE?!
W-WELL, YOUR HIGH-NESS...
THAT HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS CROWN PRINCE YUU IS IN GRAVE CONDITION.
I AM COME TO BEAR THE NEWS FROM THE CAPITAL...
THE CROWN PRINCE, HAVING RECEIVED AN ARROW WOUND, IS IN HIDING WITH HIS VALET IN THE CITY
MY STEP-MOTHER?!
AND LORD KI HATCHED A PLOT TO INSTALL HER SON TO THE THRONE.
THE ROYAL CONCUBINE, LADY AIKYOU,

TO GO AGAINST MY STEP-MOTHER?
I AGREE THAT IT IS AN UNFILIAL ACT.
YOUR HIGHNESS, THE CORE OF THE STATE ARMY IS HERE.
IT MAY BE ADVISABLE TO SEND TROOPS TO THE CAPITAL IMMEDIATELY.
...
PEOPLE- ARE GOING TO DIE?
PERHAPS.
IF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS IS FOUND TO BE SAFE, YOU MAY WITHDRAW THE TROOPS AND AVOID CONFRONTING LADY AIKYOU
HOWEVER, WE WILL BE FACING ONLY A SMALL FORCE. THE CROWN PRINCE IS ALSO WELL-LIKED BY THE PEOPLE.
KNOWING THE CROWN PRINCE, THAT IS NOT INCONCEIVABLE
MY BROTHER- WISHES TO LIKEN IT TO THE PLEDGED OX.
I WANT THE ARMY ...
THE ARMY DOES NOT EXIST FOR DECORATIVE PURPOSES

SHIIN,
YOU AND FIVE HUNDRED CAVALRYMEN WILL LEAVE AT ONCE AND PROTECT MY BROTHER!
YES, SIR!
HANNBI AND I WILL LEAD A REGIMENT INTO THE CITY.
KOUKAKU, YOU WILL FOLLOW UP WITH ANOTHER REGIMENT.
THE REST, DEFEND THE FRONTIER!
YES, SIR!
I WANT A NATION WHOSE ARMY IS LIKE THE PLEDGED OX— A MERE DECORATION.
RAISE THE FLAGS, TO THE CAPITAL!
MAY WE ALL BE PLEDGED OXEN TO MY BROTHER IN DUE COURSE!
END

榧世シキ

Shiki Kayase

I had fun writing the story—medieval China's caught my interest lately. I'm sorry I didn't do enough homework.

Spica Scans
spicaffect.wordpress.com
Arcana Vol. 6
Special Forces A Team
The Pledged Ox
Kayaso Shiki
Scanner Domitabu
Everything else Kuro Sha did everything perfectly :D